

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request further examination and reconsideration in view of the instant response. Claims 1-21 remain pending in the case. Claims 1-21 are rejected.

35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1, 8 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over United States Patent 6,658,512 by Gokulrangan, hereinafter the "Gokulrangan" reference, in view of United States Patent 6,567,807 by Robles et al., hereinafter the "Robles" reference. Applicants have reviewed the cited references and respectfully submit that the present invention as recited in Claims 1, 8 and 15 is not anticipated nor rendered obvious by Gokulrangan in view of Robles because Gokulrangan does not qualify as prior art.

Under 35 U.S.C. §103, prior art includes references with effective dates before the effective filing date of the invention. Applicants respectfully assert that the Gokulrangan reference does not qualify as prior art because the filing date of the present application, June 14, 2000, predates the effective date of the Gokulrangan reference. Specifically, the present application has a filing date of June 14, 2000, predating the September 28, 2000 filing date of the Gokulrangan reference.

Moreover, Applicants respectfully assert that the claimed embodiments are not unpatentable over Robles alone. Specifically, Robles alone does not teach, describe or suggest the claimed embodiments as recited in Claims 1, 8 and 15. Applicants respectfully assert that Robles does not teach, describe or suggest the claimed embodiments as recited in Claims 1, 8 and 15, and that these claims are allowable.

Claims 2-7, 9-14 and 16-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gokulrangan and Robles in view of United States Patent 6,466,971 by Humpleman et al., hereinafter the "Humpleman" reference. Claims 2-7 are dependent on base Claim 1, Claims 9-14 are dependent on allowable base Claim 8, and Claims 16-21 are dependent on allowable base Claim 15. Applicants have reviewed the cited references and respectfully submit that the present invention as recited in Claims 1, 8 and 15 is not anticipated nor rendered obvious by Gokulrangan and Robles in view of Humpleman because Gokulrangan does not qualify as prior art.

As described above, Applicants respectfully assert that the Gokulrangan reference does not qualify as prior art because the effective filing date of the present application predates the effective date of the Gokulrangan reference. Moreover, Applicants respectfully assert that the claimed embodiments are not unpatentable over the combination of Robles and Humpleman. Specifically, Robles and Humpleman, either alone or in combination, do not teach, describe

or suggest the claimed embodiments as recited in Claims 1, 8 and 15, and that these claims are allowable. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 2-7, 9-14 and 16-21 overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as these claims are dependent on allowable base claims.

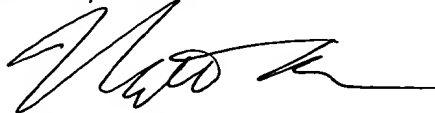
CONCLUSION

Based on the arguments presented above, Applicants respectfully assert that Claims 1-21 overcome the rejections of record and, therefore, Applicants respectfully solicit allowance of these Claims.

Applicants have reviewed the following reference that was cited but not relied upon and do not find this reference to show or suggest the present claimed invention: US 6,243,707.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative if the Examiner believes such action would expedite resolution of the present Application.

Respectfully submitted,
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